CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A selective call greeting system, comprising:
   a telephone;
   a means for producing n greetings where n is an integer of one or greater; and
   means for selecting one of said n greetings after said telephone has begun to ring.

2. A selective call greeting system as recited in claim 1 further comprising means for stopping said telephone from ringing when said means for selecting is activated.

3. A selective call greeting system as recited in claim 1 wherein each of said n greetings comprise a message indicating a time when a call will be returned as a function on n.

4. A selective call greeting system as recited in claim 1 wherein a first of said n greetings comprises a message instructing a caller to hold.

5. A selective call greeting system allowing a recipient to select a greeting for a caller after a call has been received, comprising:
   a telephone;
   a means for producing a plurality of greetings;

6	a greeting button on said telephone for selecting
7	one of said plurality of greetings after said telephone
8	has begun to ring;
9	means for disabling a ringer on said telephone in
10	response to said greeting button being pushed;
11	means for determining how many times said greeting
12	button has been pushed; and
13	means for playing a selected greeting to the
14	caller, said selected message corresponding to a number
15	of times said greeting button was pushed.

1	6. A selective call greeting system allowing a
2	recipient to select a greeting for a caller after a
3	call has been received as recited in claim 5 wherein
4	each of said plurality of greetings comprise an
5	indication of a time when the call will be returned.

1	7. A selective call greeting system allowing a
2	recipient to select a greeting for a caller after a
3	call has been received as recited in claim 5 wherein
4	said selected greeting comprises an indication of a
5	time when the call will be returned as a function of
6	said number of times said greeting button was pushed.

1	8. A selective call greeting system allowing a
2	recipient to select a greeting for a caller after the
3	call has been received as recited in claim 5 further
4	comprising means for storing a caller's message.

1	9. A selective call greeting system allowing a

2   recipient to select a greeting for a caller after a

3   call has been received as recited in claim 5 further

4   comprising:

5   an indicator on said telephone for reminding that

6   a call has been received.

1   10. A method for spontaneously selecting a greeting to

2   be played to a caller, comprising the steps of:

3   receiving a telephone call;

4   pushing a greeting button on said telephone after

5   said telephone has begun to ring;

6   stopping said telephone from ringing;

7   counting a number of times, n, said greeting

8   button is pressed; and

9   selecting a greeting to be played for a caller as

10   a function of n, said selected greeting instructing the

11   caller that the telephone call cannot be taken at this

12   time and further containing information instructing the

13   caller to hold or information regarding a time for a

14   return call.

1   11. A method for spontaneously selecting a greeting to

2   be played to a caller as recited in claim 10 further

3   comprising the step of:

4   reminding that return call needs to be made to

5   said caller if said return call has not been made

6   within a time indicted by said selected greeting.

1   12. A method for spontaneously selecting a greeting to

2   be played to a caller as recited in claim 10 further

3   comprising the step of:

4   obtaining the caller's telephone number; and

5   including the caller's telephone number in said

6   selected greeting.

1   13. A method for spontaneously selecting a greeting to

2   be played to a caller as recited in claim 10 further

3   comprising the step of:

4   offering the caller an option to leave a message;

5   and

6   storing said message.

1   14. A computer readable medium comprising code for

2   providing a telephone with a user selected greeting

3   function, said code implementing the steps of:

4   designating a button on a telephone as a greeting

5   button;

6   detecting a received telephone call;

7   stopping said telephone from ringing if said

8   greeting button has been pressed after said telephone

9   has begun to ring;

10   detecting a number n of times said greeting button

11   was pressed on said telephone after said telephone has

12   begun to ring; and

13   selecting a greeting to be played for a caller as

14   a function of n, said selected greeting instructing the

15   caller that the telephone call cannot be taken at this

16   time and further containing information instructing the

17   caller to hold or information regarding a time for a

18   return call.

1 15. A computer readable medium comprising code for
2 providing a telephone with a user selected greeting
3 function as recited in claim 14, said code further
4 comprising the step of:
5   reminding that return call needs to be made to
6 said caller if said return call has not been made
7 within a time indicted by said selected message.

1 16. A computer readable medium comprising code for
2 providing a telephone with a user selected greeting
3 function as recited in claim 14, said code further
4 comprising the steps of:
5   obtaining the caller's telephone number; and
6   including the caller's telephone number in said
7 selected greeting.

1 17. A computer readable medium comprising code for
2 providing a telephone with a user selected greeting
3 function as recited in claim 14, said code further
4 comprising the steps of:
5   offering the caller an option to leave a message;
6 and
7   storing said message.